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SAO - Floor By Floor



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Chapter 1 by Albert Kronhoff

Just once, I saw an actual shooting star.

It wasn't on a camping trip under the stars, but from my bedroom window. This wouldn't be such a rare thing to those who live in places with clear skies or that are properly dark at night, but my home of fourteen years, Kawagoe in Saitama Prefecture, neither of those things. Even on a clear night, you could only see the brightest of star with the naked eye.

But one midwinter night, I just so happened to glance out of the window and caught a glimpse of a momentary brilliance falling vertically through a starless night sky pale with the light of the city. I was in fourth or fifth grade at the time, and in my innocent youth, I decided to make a wish...only to squander it on the most pointless thing imaginable: "I wish the next monster would drop a rare item." I was in the middle of grinding for a level-up in my favourite MMORPG at the time.

I saw another shooting star of the same color and speed three (or perhaps four) years later. But this was not with the naked eye, and it did not flash against the gray night sky. It happened within the murky depths of a labyrinth created by the NerveGear--the world's first full-sensory immersive VR interface.

Chapter 2 by Matthew Horton

Hello, I am a cute little puppy who lives in the dark, and I am looking for a friend.

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